

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 IO-03 NEAE-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7546

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

USMISSION USUN

S E C R E T RABAT 0509

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AG, SS, MO

SUBJECT: ALGERIANS REQUEST CLARIFICATION ON PROVISION US
MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO MOROCCO

REF: ALGIERS 0231

1. RE SPECIFIC ALGERIAN CONCERNS CITED REFTEL PARAS 3A AND B,
RADIO LUXEMBOURG REPORT ON U.S. AIRLIFT OF M-48 TANKS TO
MOROCCO IS COMPLETELY FALSE AS DEPT. AND DOD KNOW. AS TO
ALGERIAN REPORTS OF RECENT UNLOADING OF "HEAVY AMERICAN
MILITARY EQUIPMENT, "55 APC'S AND VARIOUS COMMERCIALLY PURCHASED
VEHICLES WERE UNLOADED IN LATE DECEMBER AND EARLY JANUARY IN
CASABLANCA, ONLY DELIVERIES EVEN REMOTELY WITHIN SCOPE OF
THESE REPORTS.

2. WHILE ALGERIAN INFORMATION ON ALLEGED U.S. MILITARY DELIVERIES
IS FALSE, WE QUESTION WHETHER IT USEFUL TO ENLIGHTEN ALGERIANS
CONCERNING SPECIFIC U.S. DELIVERIES TO MOROCCO, EXCEPT PERHAPS
TO DISPEL NOTION THAT ANY AIRLIFT UNDERWAY. OUR CONFIDENTIAL
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BRIEFING OF SPANIARDS IN PAST ON US-MOROCCAN MILITARY SUPPLY

ARRANGEMENTS REFLECTED ENTIRELY DIFFERENT RELATIONSHIP THAN WHAT WE HAVE WITH ALGERIA. RELEASE BY USG TO GOA OF WHAT MOROCCANS CONSIDER HIGHLY SENSITIVE INFORMATION ON THEIR MILITARY PREPAREDNESS WOULD BE TAKEN HERE AS BREACH OF FAITH AND COULD BE VERY DAMAGING TO OUR MILITARY SUPPLY PROGRAM AND TO US-MOROCCAN RELATIONS IN GENERAL.

3. IT THEREFORE SEEMS TO US THAT WE WOULD DO BETTER AS FAR AS OUR OVERALL CREDIBILITY IS CONCERNED TO CONTINUE TO STRESS ONGOING, LONG-TERM, AND STEADY NATURE OF OUR PROGRAM HERE IN ANY DISCUSSIONS WITH ALGERIANS. INASMUCH AS ALGERIANS HARDLY LIKELY TO KEEP US INFORMED ON DETAILS OF ARMS SUPPLIED TO THEM BY SOVIETS AND LIBYANS, AVOIDANCE OF SIMILAR DETAILS BY US SEEMS ALL THE MORE DEFENSIBLE VIS-A-VIS GOA.

4. ALGERIAN DEMARCHE REPORTED REFTEL STRIKES US AS BEING DESIGNED IN LARGE MEASURE TO ELICIT A BASIC POLICY STATEMENT FROM USG AT THIS TENSE JUNCTURE. IN ADDITION TO STRESSING OUR BASIC NEUTRALITY ON WHAT IS ESSENTIALLY AN INTER-ARAB DISPUTE, THIS MIGHT PROVIDE GOOD OPPORTUNITY FOR EXPRESSION OF US CONCERN OVER DANGERS OF ESCALATION AND HOPE THAT GOA WILL EXERCISE RESTRAINT. FOR WHATEVER IT MAY BE WORTH, WE IN RABAT ARE BECOMING INCREASINGLY CONVINCED THAT GOM IS PRESENTLY FIRMLY COMMITTED TO LIMITED AND ACHIEVABLE OBJECTIVE OF SECURING CONTROL OF ITS PORTION OF SPANISH SAHARA, AND WHETHER THIS SITUATION IS ALLOWED TO DEGENERATE INTO WIDER CONFLICT IS ESSENTIALLY A MATTER FOR GOA TO DECIDE.

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